PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

P.O. Box 10076
Colorado Springs, CO 80932
Hotline: (719) 575-8658

Keeping Families Strong **September, 2009**

Palmer High School GSA Sponsor to Speak

Anton Schulzki, social studies teacher and faculty sponsor of the gay-straight club at Palmer High School, will be the speaker at the September 15th PFLAG meeting.

The Palmer club had a rough beginning, when the school district refused to allow formation of the club. With the support of the ACLU, students and parents took the district to court to persuade the district to change its policy.

Gay-straight alliance clubs (GSAs) are as strong as their student leaders in any given year. Mr. Schulzki notes that in some years the students are activist and eager to reach out into the broader community, and in other years, particularly when the leadership is younger, they may focus on support and socializing principally within the school.

This will be the second PFLAG program acknowledging the beginning of the school year and the powerful role that gay-supportive teachers play in their schools. The Colorado Springs chapter of PFLAG will be reaching out to schools increasingly this year through the Safe Schools Program.

At the August PFLAG meeting, Mary Beth Hamilton, a reading intervention teacher from Harrison High School, spoke about her ef-

(Continued on page 2)

SEPTEMBER PFLAG MEETING

September 15, 2009
7:00 P.M.

Program:

Speaker: Anton Schulzki
Faculty Sponsor,
Palmer High School
Gay-Straight Alliance Club

Small group discussion
Conversation, cookies...

The Dwelling Place
508 North Tejon Street

Everyone is welcome.
Social time 6:30 p.m.

Congratulations to Alma and the Lavender Film Festival

PFLAG congratulates Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival and its founder, Alma Cremonesi, as the festival rolls out a stellar 10th anniversary lineup of films at Colorado College on September 18-19-20.

The longest-running gay and lesbian film festival in Colorado, the PPLFF presents films produced by independent filmmakers from the United States and abroad. PFLAG is sponsoring the opening night film titled *Patrik, Age 1.5*, from Sweden.

A married male couple, who seem to have it all, want the same as their heterosexual neighbors: a child. When news of a young Patrik arrives, the two men are bubbling with anticipation only to be surprised by the child they're offered.

The PFLAG-sponsored film was the winner of the Audience Award this

year at the San Francisco Film Festival.

Eighteen films will be shown over three days. Ticket packages are available online at www.pplff.org, at Spice of Life, 727 Manitou Ave., and the Underground, 110 North Nevada Avenue.

Join and Support Your PFLAG Chapter

The September PFLAG newsletter is mailed out with a letter inviting you to renew your PFLAG membership or, if you are not already a member, to become one for the 2009-10 year.

The Colorado Springs chapter of PFLAG receives no funding from the national office of PFLAG, and, in fact, must send in a portion of its membership funds to the national office to support national activities.

We rent space for monthly meetings, publish a newsletter, provide literature to the community, maintain a telephone hotline and a website, rent a booth at Pride, and have a growing school outreach program.

So please — JOIN—DONATE — VOLUNTEER! We need you.

This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

PFLAG Mission Statement:

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) persons, their families and friends through:

√ **support**, to cope with an adverse society,
√ **education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and
√ **advocacy**, to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

****

PFLAG IS FOR EVERYONE

If you've never been to one of our meetings, we feel you will find it rewarding and may find it leads to a new sense of family. Membership is not required. All are welcome.

****

To join the chapter and receive the newsletter regularly, complete and mail the membership form on page four. To receive complimentary copies of the newsletter, please call PFLAG at 575-8658.

****

PFLAG Colorado Springs website:
www.cspflag.org

E-mail address: info@cspflag.org

PFLAG National Office website:
www.pflag.org

Always Remember—

Discussions at PFLAG meetings are to be kept Confidential.

The PFLAG meeting is a safe space where each person will be treated with kindness and respect by everyone present.

Research Links Poor Health of LGBT Youth to Family Rejection

Reprinted from Advocate.com

Researchers have established a correlation between the health of lesbian, gay and bisexual adolescents and how their families react to them coming out.

"For the first time, research has established a predictive link between specific, negative family reactions to their child's sexual orientation and serious health problems for these adolescents in young adulthood— such as depression, illegal drug use, risk for HIV infection, and suicide attempts," said Dr. Caitlin Ryan, Director of the Family Acceptance Project at the Cesar E. Chavez Institute at San Francisco State University and lead author of the research.

The major research findings included:

- LGB young adults to experienced higher rates of family rejection had significantly poorer health outcomes.
- LBG young adults who reported higher levels of family rejection during adolescence were 8.4 times more likely to report having attempted suicide, 5.9 times more likely to report high levels of depression, 3.4 times more likely to use illegal drugs, and 3.4 times more likely to report having engaged in unprotected sexual intercourse, compared with peers from families that reported no or low levels of family rejection.
- Latino males reported the highest number of negative family reactions to their sexual orientation in adolescence.

"This study clearly shows the tremendous harm of family rejection, even it parents think they are well-intentioned, following deeply held beliefs or even protecting their children." said Dr. Sten Bermund, a pediatrician and Amos Christie Chair of Global Health at Vanderbilt University.

Palmer GSA Sponsor/ High Schools (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

forts to help students. She identified several factors that can inhibit a student's ability to learn: (i) learning disabilities; (ii) socio-economic challenges (poverty); (iii) being in a racial minority; (iv) coming from an abusive or neglectful home; and (v) being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning. Some of her students struggle with several or all of these factors. She confirmed that anti-gay slurs abound in high schools and noted that one study suggested that the average high school student hears 25 anti-gay remarks per day.

Mary Beth distributed a fact sheet titled "What Educators Can Do" which draws on PFLAG and GLSEN (Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network) resources to assist teachers in making their schools safer for GLBT youth. Since students are acknowledging their sexual orientation at a younger age than in the past, these suggestions are valuable not only for high school educators, but also for those teaching at the middle school and elementary school levels. A copy of "What Educators Can Do" is included with this newsletter. Please pass it along to any educator you know who might find it useful.

Soulforce Seeks Equality 2010 Bus Riders

Soulforce News Release:

Apply for the 2010 Equality Ride!
The Soulforce 2010 Equality Ride is hitting the road this March, and the Equality Ride Team is busy getting the word out to young adults (18-28) to apply to come aboard.

The application deadline is September 20th. Those who are interested can apply online at www.soulforce.org/equalityride.

The Ride gives riders and students a chance to deconstruct injustice and the rhetoric that sustains it. The idea is this: we get on a bus and journey to various institutions of higher learning, many with explicit discrimination policies toward LGBTQ students.

Through information, conversation and educational programming we explore concepts of diversity, comparing the effects of inclusive and exclusive viewpoints. More practically, we share and gain insights about how our beliefs influence policy and culture, thereby impacting society. Guided by the principles of nonviolence, we set out ready to meet people where they are.

A Rider may live anywhere in the world, come from any ethnic background, claim any gender identity or sexual orientation, and may or may not identify as a person of faith. They under stand the value of meeting people where they are and that the process towards peace and liberation begins with a conversation, not hostility.

What we look for is a willingness to learn, to engage, and to create. Encourage young people you know to consider applying and boarding the bus with us this spring!

"The purpose of Soulforce is freedom for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people from religious and political oppression through the practice of relentless nonviolent resistance."

What is Soulforce?

SOULFORCE

Soulforce began in 1998 and is named after Ghandi's term "satyagraha", which means "truth force" or "life force".Ghandi defined this term as a plan of action that developed inner lives while working to transform society. Throughout history, these principles have guided many nonviolent justice movements, including Martin Luther King Jr.'s fight for racial equality.

Soulforce is a nonprofit organization whose administrative office is located in Austin, Texas, under the leadership of Jeff Lutes, Executive Director. Its co-founders, the Rev. Mel White (author of *Stranger at the Gate*) , and his partner, Gary Nixon, live in Lynchburg. Virginia, where Gary runs the business office.

Soulforce operates as a network of staff and volunteers committed to teaching and applying the principles of nonviolence to end discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. More information can be found at www.soulforce.org.

PFLAG Website is Renewed and Revitalized

The Colorado Springs PFLAG website has been reviewed, revised and updated, thanks to the efforts of Jerry Albrent, our membership chairperson and computer guru. The new site is:

www.cspflag.org

E-mail can be addressed to the chapter at:

info@cspflag.org

and we can send e-mail thanking Jerry for all his work to that address, since he is the one who is managing the e-mail.

Newsletters are being posted to the site, links to other organizations are being compiled, and articles and book lists should soon be available.

Suggestions for the website can be e-mailed to Jerry, and he would appreciate some **HELP** in gathering materials to be posted on the site.

Inside/Out Pantry

We've been lagging on our commitment to bring food for the Inside/Out Youth Services Pantry to PFLAG meetings. Let's get it going again. What to bring? See our website!

APA Warns Against Reparative Therapies

Upon completing a careful scientific review of the published literature on conversion therapy, and having undergone a rigorous American Psychological Association peer review process, the Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Response to Sexual Orientation has concluded that sexual orientation is unlikely to change due to "therapeutic" efforts and has issued a resolution calling on mental health professionals to avoid telling clients they can change from gay to straight through therapy or other treatments. The full APA press release can be read at http://www.apa.org/releases/therapeutic.html.

This finding supports the goals of the 2009 Anti-Heterosexism Conference (see Calendar, p. 4). "Heterosexism" is the presumption that others are heterosexual and that opposite sex attractions and relationships are preferable and superior to those of the same sex.

BULLETIN BOARD

September 11-14 — Colorado ManREACH gathering at LaForet in Black Forest — Colorado ManREACH is a growing, grassroots community of gay/bi/queer men. Created in 2003, its mission is to build heart-centered connections and community among g/b/q men who live outside the Denver metropolitan area, including the rural and mountain areas of Colorado, and the cities and towns along the Front Range and Western Slope. For more information, visit www.manreach.org, email info@manreach.org or call (719) 271-5865 or (303) 960-9323.

September 12 — Boulder Pride PrideFest Block Party 11 a.m.—5 p.m. on the Pearl Street Mall and Boulder county Courthouse Lawn. Nuclia Waste will be the fabulous hostess once again. Entertainment, after-party with dancing. For more information see www.boulderpride.org

September 18-19-20 — Tenth Annual Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival— Colorado College (Armstrong Hall and Cornerstone Arts Center) See article p. 1. Call 719-38-MOVIE or go to www.pplff.org.

November 20-21 — Out Loud Colorado Springs Men's Chorus Fall Concert — "Come Fly With Me" — Friday 7:30 p.m., Saturday 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Members of PFLAG will be ushering.

November 20-22 — The 2009 Anti-Heterosexism Conference — West Palm Beach, Fla. The conference is open to everyone who cares about the welfare of LGBTQ people and wants to help stop the harm caused by heterosexism, reparative therapy, ex-gay ministries and other sexual orientation change efforts. For more information see: http://www.soulforce.org/anti-heterosexism-conference.

Mom Supports Anti-Bullying Act

WASHINGTON, July 8, 2009 - Sirdeaner Walker, the mother of 11-year-old Carl Walker-Hoover, who died by suicide after enduring constant bullying at school, testified today in front of the House Subcommittees on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education and Healthy Families and Communities Wednesday in support of the Safe Schools Improvement Act - federal legislation to require that schools adopt anti-bullying policies.

Carl, who attended New Leadership Charter School in Springfield, Mass., took his own life April 6 after enduring constant bullying at school, including being called "gay" and "faggot" even though he did not identify as gay.

"Carl liked football and basketball and playing video games with his little brother," Walker testified. "He loved the Lord and he loved his family. What could make a child his age despair so much that he would take his own life? That question haunts me to this day, and I will probably never know the answer.

"School bullying is a national crisis, and we need a national solution to deal with it. That is why I am here today. Teachers, administrators and other school personnel need additional support and clear guidance about how to ensure that all kids feel safe in school. Congress can make sure they have that guidance and support by making anti-bullying policies mandatory in all of our nation's schools."

Show your support for the Safe Schools Improvement Act by signing a petition at www.glsen.org

---

Stay tuned for ways you can help PFLAG support safe schools in our community. Coming in October newsletter,

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010.

Name(s) of Member(s): _____

_____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

E-mail _____

____New member ____Renewing member

____ Regular Membership	$ 30
____ Supporting Member—Silver	40
____ Supporting Member—Gold	60
____ Supporting Member—Platinum	90

Amount Enclosed $_____

Each year our chapter must contribute $15.00 for each paid membership to the PFLAG national office to support its mission.

Make checks payable to Colorado Springs PFLAG and mail to P.O. Box 10076, Colorado Springs, CO 80932. Membership fees and contributions are tax deductible. All information will remain confidential. PFLAG is a 501(C) 3 nonprofit organization.